

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 489

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SCUL, GE

SUBJECT: IREX-GDR EXCHANGE AGREEMENT

REF: STATE 040759

1. LITTELL MET MATTHEWS FOR DINNER AT KEMPINSKI FEBRUARY 25 AND TOGETHER WITH HIM PICKED UP KASSOFF AND CARMICHAEL AT TEMPELHOF FOLLOWING DAY. AT THEIR REQUEST, DROVE THEM TO EAST BERLIN AND TURNED THEM OVER TO DRS. HOELZER AND BETTIN AT MINISTRY HIGHER EDUCATION. BETTIN, WAS INTRODUCED BY HOELZER MERELY AS "COLLEAGUE WHO KNEW ENGLISH AND WOULD ASSIST AS INTERPRETER" MFA REPRESENTATIVE HOFFMANN WILL ALSO PARTICIPATE IN TALKS.

2. PARTY PROCEEDED FROM MINISTRY TO HOTEL UNTER DEN LINDEN TO CHECK IN AND FOR PRE-NEGOTIATION DINNER IN WHICH LITTELL DID NOT JOIN. ALSO DECLINED IREX INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN NEGOTIATION, BUT ASKED TO BE KEPT INFORMED AS TO HOW PROCEEDING. IREX TEAM WILL COME TO EMBASSY FRIDAY TO REPORT ON RESULT OF SESSIONS.

3. BOTH MATTHEWS AND KASSOFF EMPHASIZED IREX PLAN TO CONDUCT FIRM NEGOTIATION. STATE IREX HAD HELD BACK FUNDS FOR GDR EXCHANGES FOR PAST TWO YEARS. IF PROBLEM ARISES IN ACHIEVING SATISFACTORY AGREEMENT NOW, IREX PLANS INFORM GDR AUTHORITIES THIS LAST CHANCE AND FUNDS WILL BE UTILIZED ELSEWHERE. HOWEVER, GIVEN RECENT

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HISTORY OF IREX-SPONSORED VISITS TO U.S. BY GDR

OFFICIALS AND MINISTRY INVITATION TO NEGOTIATE, THEY ARE CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC OF ACHIEVING SUCCESSFUL AGREEMENT. THEY HOPE TO ACHIEVE MINIMUM 20-MAN MONTH PROGRAM PER ANNUM: I.E., 40-MAN MONTH FOR INITIAL TWO-YEAR PERIOD. THEY WILL PUSH FOR UP TO 75-MAN MONTH TOTAL PROGRAM.

4. MATTHEWS CALLED THIS MORNING PRIOR TO BEGINNING NEGOTIATIONS, COMMENTING THAT IT WAS NOT NORMAL IN THEIR WARSAW PACT COUNTRY EXPERIENCE FOR AN MFA OFFICIAL TO PARTICIPATE IN TALKS. EMBASSY WILL REPORT FURTHER DETAILS WHEN KNOWN.COOPER

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